

II. THOROUGHFARE PLANNING PRINCIPLES

Objectives

Typically, the urban street system occupies 25 to 30 percent of the total developed land in an urban area. Since the system is permanent and expensive to build and maintain, much care and foresight are needed in its development. Thoroughfare planning is the process public officials use to assure the development of the most appropriate street system that will meet existing and future travel desires within the urban area.

The primary aim of a thoroughfare plan is to guide the development of the urban street system in a manner consistent with the changing traffic patterns. A thoroughfare plan will enable street improvements to be made as traffic demands increase, and it helps eliminate unnecessary improvements, so needless expense can be avoided. By developing the urban street system to keep pace with increasing traffic demands, a maximum utilization of the system can be attained, requiring a minimum amount of land for street purposes. In addition to providing for traffic needs, the thoroughfare plan should incorporate those details of good urban planning necessary to present a pleasing and efficient urban community. The location of present and future population, commercial, and industrial development affect major street and highway locations. Conversely, the location of major streets and highways within the urban area will influence the urban development pattern.

Other objectives of a thoroughfare plan include:

1. providing for the orderly development of an adequate major street system as land development occurs,
2. reducing travel and transportation costs,
3. reducing the cost of major street improvements to the public through the coordination of the street system with private action,
4. enabling private interests to plan their actions, improvements, and development with full knowledge of public intent,
5. minimizing disruption and displacement of people and businesses through long range planning for major street improvements,
6. reducing environmental impact, such as air pollution, resulting from transportation, and
7. increasing travel safety.